

LESSON 1: STUDY GUIDE FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS (INCLUDING SCRIPTURE MEMORY AND HOMEWORK)

Daily devotions are vital to your spiritual development. To assist you in this practice, each lesson's **STUDY GUIDE FOR DAILY DEVOTIONS** is correlated to the lesson's **HOMEWORK**. This lesson's **STUDY GUIDE** highlights basic steps of spiritual growth and presents the basis for true biblical counseling (*based on Psalm 1:1-4; I Thessalonians 5:17; II Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17; I Peter 2:2*).

Scripture Memory

1. * Memorize *Ephesians 2:8-9*;
2. Write both verses and their appropriate Scripture references and carry them with you throughout the day. At every opportunity during the day, read, meditate on, and memorize *Ephesians 2:8-9*.

Daily Devotional Study Guide

FIRST DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. * Read **BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE: YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (Lesson 1, Page 2). Highlight the listed verses in your Bible.
3. * In your own words, write the meaning of *Ephesians 2:8-9*.
4. Close in prayer.
5. Take your Scripture memory card with you today wherever you go and use your spare moments to memorize *Ephesians 2:8-9*.

SECOND DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. Begin to study **YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (Lesson 1, Pages 3-7). This is the first day of a three-day study in this important section. Look up any listed verses necessary for you to understand these biblical truths.
3. Close in prayer.

THIRD DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. Continue your study through **YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (Lesson 1, Pages 3-7).
3. Close in prayer.

FOURTH DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. Continue your study through **YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (Lesson 1, Pages 3-7).
3. Did you fail to take advantage of spare moments to memorize your verse? List these "lost opportunities" and when they occurred; make a plan to improve.
4. Close in prayer.

FIFTH DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. * Write how you can have eternal life through Jesus Christ (refer to *Principle 1*, Lesson 1, Page 2, or refer to **IV. God empowers you to choose His solution to your spiritual problem on Page 4** of Lesson 1). Write at least one Scripture reference for each point.
4. Close in prayer.

SIXTH DAY

1. Open in prayer.
2. * In a brief paragraph, write how a person can know for certain that he has eternal life.
4. Close in prayer.

SEVENTH DAY

1. Open in prayer.
3. Review **YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (Lesson 1, Pages 3-7), looking up any verses that may have been overlooked in your previous study.
5. Close in prayer.
6. Evaluate your use of spare moments to memorize *Ephesians 2:8-9* this week. List improvements that you will make in the next week to use your spare moments better in memorizing God's Word.

LESSON 1

YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9

Self-Confrontation Manual by BCF

LESSON 1: YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

The most significant decision you will ever make concerns your willingness to follow God's plan for your life as revealed in the Bible. This decision directly impacts your daily life and your eternal destiny (*based on Psalm 119:165; Proverbs 1:33; Matthew 6:25-34; Mark 8:34-38; John 3:16-21, 36; Acts 2:38-39; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:2-10; Revelation 20:15*).

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLE: YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

God enables you to take the necessary first step towards lasting biblical change. This step is your response to God's demonstrated love for you in Christ Jesus (*based on John 1:12, 3:16-21; Romans 5:8; II Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:8-9; I John 4:10*).

God's plan for you to change in a biblical way centers on His Son, Jesus Christ.

(Principle 1) Because God's standard is one of perfection (*Leviticus 19:2; Matthew 5:48*), you cannot meet it by your own efforts (*Psalm 143:2; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23*). You cannot save yourself (*Proverbs 20:9*) nor depend on any other human being to redeem you (*Psalm 49:7*). You need to recognize your helplessness to meet God's standard (*Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-12*) and need to repent of your sin (*Luke 15:7; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 17:30-31, 26:19-20; Romans 2:4; II Peter 3:9*). By God's grace and mercy, you recognize your lost condition and believe wholeheartedly and sincerely on the Lord Jesus Christ to receive the gift of eternal life (*John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 11:25-26; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5-7; I John 5:11-13*) and forgiveness for your sins (*Mark 16:16; John 3:16-18, 8:24; Acts 2:38, 4:12; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 1:7*).

YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

Even though eternal life is a gift, many reject it
(*Matthew 7:13-14; John 1:9-12, 3:16-21; Romans 6:23*).

- I. If you do not already have a sincere (guileless, pure, genuine), personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, you have a spiritual problem that only God can solve. Without this relationship to Jesus, you are:**
- A. Hopelessly separated from God (*Romans 6:23a; Ephesians 2:1-3, 11-12; Colossians 1:21*),
 - B. Spiritually dead in your own sin (*Romans 3:23, 5:12; Ephesians 2:1, 5; Colossians 2:13*),
 - C. Hostile to God (*Romans 5:10a, 8:7; Colossians 1:21*),
 - D. Blinded by Satan (*II Corinthians 4:3-4*) and held captive by him to do his will (*II Timothy 2:24-26, esp. verse 26*),
 - E. Powerless to overcome sin's hold on your life (*Ecclesiastes 7:20; John 8:34; Romans 1:28-32, 5:6, 6:16; Galatians 5:19-21; II Peter 2:19*),
 - F. Unable to understand the things of God (*Proverbs 14:12, 16:25, Isaiah 55:8-9; I Corinthians 2:14*),
 - G. Unable to please God or to walk in His way (*Psalms 143:2b; Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-12, 23; 8:7-8; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; II Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5-7; Hebrews 11:6*), and
 - H. Incapable of living a spiritually fruitful and meaningful life (*John 15:4-6*).
- II. God's answer to your spiritual problem is based on His character.**
- A. God is just, so you face His wrath and judgment in your sinful state (*Romans 1:18, 6:23a; Ephesians 2:3; Hebrews 9:27; II Peter 3:7*).
 - B. On the other hand, God is loving and doesn't want you to perish in your sin (*John 3:16; Romans 5:8; I Timothy 2:3-4; II Peter 3:9*), so He draws you toward His Son, Jesus (*John 6:44-45, 65*).
- III. The answer to your spiritual problem is found in God's Son, Jesus Christ.**
- A. By His gracious and merciful love, God gave His one and only begotten Son, Jesus, as the *only* answer for your helpless spiritual condition (*Isaiah 53:2-12; John 3:16, 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 5:6; Ephesians 1:3-12; I Timothy 2:5-6; I John 4:10*).
 - B. Since you could not save yourself or do anything to merit God's favor and mercy (*Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-9; II Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5-7*), Jesus paid the full price for your redemption by dying on the cross for the penalty for your sin (*Romans 5:8; I Corinthians 15:3-4; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:7; I Thessalonians 1:10; I Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 10:10-14; I Peter 1:18-19, 3:18*).

- C. God accepted and approved His Son's sacrificial death for your sin by raising Jesus from the dead (*Romans 1:4, 4:25*). Jesus Christ is eternally alive (*Acts 2:32; Romans 6:9; Revelation 1:17-18*), is with God (*Romans 8:34; Hebrews 8:1*), and is Lord of all (*Philippians 2:9-11; Revelation 17:14, 19:16*). Through His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ is victorious over sin (*Romans 6:10*), death (*Romans 6:9*), and the devil (*Hebrews 2:14*).
- D. Through Jesus, you can:
1. Have your sins forgiven (*Acts 5:31, 10:43; Ephesians 1:7, 4:32; Colossians 1:13-14, 2:13-14*) and be reconciled to God (*II Corinthians 5:18-19*);
 2. Experience a spiritual new birth (*John 3:3; I Peter 1:3, 23; I John 5:1*);
 3. Receive the gift of eternal life through God's gracious gift of faith (*John 3:16; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 11:25-26; 17:1-3; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Timothy 1:16; I John 5:11-12*);
 4. Have access to God (*John 14:6; Ephesians 2:18, 3:11-12; Hebrews 10:19-22*);
 5. Be a member of God's family (*John 1:12; Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 3:26; Ephesians 1:5, 2:19; I John 3:1-2*);
 6. Understand the things of God (*John 14:26, 16:13-15; I Corinthians 2:9-13*);
 7. Become a new person with the capability for living in a totally new manner (*Romans 6:4-22; II Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 4:13*); and
 8. Be empowered to change, to mature into Christlikeness, and to have an increasingly intimate knowledge of God Himself (*John 17:3; Romans 8:2, 28-29; II Corinthians 5:17; Philippians 1:6, 4:13; Colossians 1:9-11; I Thessalonians 2:13; II Peter 1:3-4*).

IV. God empowers you to choose His solution to your spiritual problem.

- A. When you recognize God's love (*John 3:16; I John 4:10*) and accept His Truth as revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ (*John 14:6*), you will be enabled through faith to:
1. Believe in Jesus (*John 5:24; Romans 10:8-13*) who once and for all offered Himself as a sacrifice for your sin (*Hebrews 10:4-22*);
 2. Repent of your sin (*Mark 1:15; Luke 15:7; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 26:20; II Peter 3:9*);
 3. Wholeheartedly believe that the blood of Jesus Christ which was shed on the Cross provides forgiveness for your sin (*Romans 3:23-25; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:19-23; I Peter 1:18-19*) and likewise believe that God raised Jesus from the dead so that you might walk in newness of life (*Romans 4:24-25, 6:4, 8:11, 10:9; I Corinthians 15:12-22*); and
 4. Sincerely receive the Lord Jesus Christ into your life (*John 1:12; I John 5:12*), and as a new creation (*II Corinthians 5:17*), live in faithful and loving obedience to God's Word (the Bible) (*I John 2:3-6*).
- B. If you reject God's truth by refusing to repent of your sin and thus fail to receive the gift of eternal life through God's Son, Jesus Christ, you will remain:
1. Under God's judgment (*John 3:18, 36; Romans 1:28-32*);
 2. Ignorant of spiritual matters (*Isaiah 55:8-9; I Corinthians 1:18a, 2:14*);
 3. Powerless to overcome sin in your life (*John 8:34; II Peter 2:19*);
 4. Unable to please God (*Romans 8:8; Hebrews 11:6*);

5. Guaranteed increasing heartache, problems, and difficulty for yourself (*Proverbs 13:15, 14:12, 17:20, 26:12; Romans 2:8-9; Colossians 3:25*);
 6. Doomed to die in your sins (*John 8:21-24*); and
 7. Under condemnation to eternal punishment, forever separated from God's presence (*II Peter 3:7; Revelation 20:15*).
- C. If you decide to alter God's plan of salvation in Christ Jesus to accommodate:
- Your own wisdom which is foolish and inadequate to know God (*I Corinthians 1:21, 3:19-20*),
- Your own thoughts which are contrary to God's ways (*Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 8:6-8*), or
- Your own desires which are contrary to the Spirit of God (*Galatians 5:17*); then
- You thereby place yourself under God's condemnation (*Mark 16:16*), His reproof (*Proverbs 30:6*), His chastisement (*Revelation 22:18-19*), and His curse (*Galatians 1:6-9*).

V. By faith, you can take the first step of biblical change.

If you have never taken this first step to change biblically, you can do so right now. Simply tell God you know you are a sinner and need His forgiveness of your sin. Acknowledge to God that neither you nor anyone else but Jesus Christ can save you because He alone died to pay the penalty for sin and rose from the dead so that you might have a new life. By faith, receive the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and thank God for His grace and love to you through Jesus. With a sincere and repentant heart, demonstrate your commitment to Him by being obedient to His Word.

VI. You must understand that man's way of solving problems falls short of God's solutions.

- A. There are two reasons the plan of salvation has been explained in detail.
1. To begin with, it is essential that you understand the spiritual principle that all of man's wisdom, philosophy, devices, procedures, manipulations, and sincerity cannot substitute for God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ (see IV., point C. above). Any person claiming to have taken a different way to salvation except through Jesus Christ is likened in Scripture to a thief and a robber (*John 10:1, 7*).
 2. The next reason is consistent with, and follows, the same basic spiritual principle as the first. The problems brought on by man as a result of his sin of disobedience in the Garden of Eden (*Genesis chapter 3; Romans 5:12*) cannot be solved by man's devices and philosophies (*I Corinthians 3:19-20; Colossians 2:6-8*), regardless of the futile attempts to mix God's Word with unregenerate suppositions and theories (*Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:19*).
 - a. This futility is especially realized when you see that God's Word claims total sufficiency to solve all of life's problems (*II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:2-4*).
 - b. By merely dealing in a superficial way with the basic problems of rebellion and disobedience, man's wisdom seeks to thwart the very will and plan of God to bring him to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to a subsequent reliance on the Word of God for every area of life.

- B. The Word of God has been given to man as the sole source for finding God's solutions to the real problems that plague him (*Psalm 19:7-11; II Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; II Peter 1:2-4*).

VII. You need to understand the difference between man's way and God's way in your search for a contented, joyful, and peaceful way of life.

- A. The primary difference is that man's way is oriented to *self*: to please self, to comfort self, to rely on self, to fulfill self, to forgive self, to exalt self, and to love self. This is described in Scripture as the old self-nature (*Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9*).
- B. God's way is
1. To regenerate and change you by:
 - a. Putting off from you the old nature (*Romans 6:6; Ephesians 4:22; Colossians 3:9*),
 - b. Putting on you the new nature (*Romans 6:7-8; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10*), and
 - c. Renewing the spirit of your mind as part of your continual process of maturing in Christlikeness (*Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10*).
 2. To empower and strengthen you to mature as you:
 - a. Deny self and follow Jesus (*Luke 9:23-24*);
 - b. Lay aside (put off) the practices of the old self-nature (*Romans 6:11-22; Ephesians 4:25-32; Colossians 3:5-17; Revelation 2:4-5*) and walk in a manner worthy of the Lord (*Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10*); and
 - c. Please God in all things (*II Corinthians 5:9; Colossians 1:10*).
- C. God's plan, instead of the ideologies which focus on self, establishes your true position in Christ and gives provision for you to be:
1. Forgiven of all your sins (*Colossians 2:13-14*) and become a new creation (*II Corinthians 5:17*) by partaking of God's divine nature (*II Peter 1:4*);
 2. A child and heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ (*Romans 8:14-17*);
 3. A citizen of heaven (*Philippians 3:20*), blessed with every spiritual blessing (*Ephesians 1:3*) and fully complete in Christ Jesus (*Colossians 2:9-10*);
 4. Strong in the Lord (*Ephesians 6:10-17*) as a functioning and maturing member of the body of Christ (*Ephesians 4:11-16*);
 5. More than a conqueror through the Lord Jesus Christ (*Romans 8:37; I John 4:4*), since you have been released from sin's slavery (*Romans 6:5-7*) and have been delivered out of the domain (authority) of darkness and into the kingdom of Christ (*Colossians 1:13*);
 6. An ambassador for Christ (*II Corinthians 5:20*), a member of a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a citizen of a holy nation, a possession of God (*I Peter 2:9*), and a holy temple of the living God (*II Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21*);
 7. Transformed by the renewing of your mind (*Romans 12:2*), taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (*II Corinthians 10:5*);
 8. Full of His peace (*John 16:33*) and joy (*John 15:11, 17:13*);
 9. Changed by the Word of God (*I Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 3:16-17*);

10. Led by the Spirit of God (*Romans 8:14*) to understand the things of God (*I Corinthians 2:9-13*);
 11. Able to accomplish (or endure) anything in God's will for you through Christ Jesus (*Philippians 4:13*), knowing that God is in total control of your life (*Romans 8:28-29*; *I Corinthians 10:13*; *Philippians 1:6*); and
 12. Empowered to practice biblical love, thus proving yourself to be a disciple of Christ (*John 13:35*).
- D. Throughout this course, the difference between Satan's plan and God's plan for your life will be shown.
1. Satan's plan is to keep you oriented toward gratifying, pleasing, exalting, and esteeming self.
 2. God's plan emphasizes that you are to live for Him, since your old self-nature was crucified and buried with Christ in order that you might walk in newness of life (*Romans chapter 6*; *II Corinthians 5:15-21*; *Colossians 3:2-17*).
- E. Even as man has sought continuously for substitutes to the new birth, he also seeks self-centered solutions to his problems resulting from his original sin.

These man-contrived solutions to problems of the mind, heart, and spirit are as unacceptable to God as are man's futile speculations and substitutes for salvation and the unalterable truths of God's Word (*based on Psalm 119:160*; *Proverbs 14:12*, *30:5-6*; *Jeremiah 17:9-10*; *Matthew 15:1-20*; *John 4:23-24*; *Acts 4:12*; *Romans 1:21, 25, 28*; *8:5-10*; *I Corinthians 3:18-20*; *II Corinthians 7:1*; *Ephesians 4:22-24*; *Philippians 2:3-5, 3:18-19*; *II Timothy 3:1-5*).

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LESSON 1

YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)

OPENING PRAYER AND SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Before you begin this lesson, ask for God's help in understanding His Word and for wisdom and strength to apply what you learn in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Begin memorizing *Ephesians 2:8-9* from a literal translation of the Bible. Then, be prepared to recite these verses at the end of this lesson. To help you with this, write the verses on cards and carry them with you throughout each day so that you can memorize them during your spare time. Be sure you identify the translation from which you are memorizing for the person to whom you recite.

Why is this study important for you?

In order to answer this question, you need to start by reviewing God's overall plan for reaching the world and how you and I fit into His plan. We know His plan from Jesus' words just before He went back to heaven. According to *Acts 1:8*, what is God's plan for reaching the world?

1.

We know from this passage that the Lord's eternal plan is to use believers as His witnesses in their own communities, in the nations, and even in the remotest part of the earth.

The Lord not only tells us what His plan is; He also tells us how to fulfill the great task of reaching the world. Read *Matthew 28:19-20*. This frequently quoted passage describes God's method of equipping and encouraging His children to make disciples of Jesus Christ. What two components are described in these verses as God's methodology for making disciples?

2.

This is often called the "Great Commission" because it is a command to every believer. The first component implies that evangelism is part of making disciples. Often, this is the only part of the "Great Commission" that is emphasized. But the second component is just as important. It involves helping the new disciple to live God's way.

The discipleship process we just examined must be so thorough that the disciple learns to teach others in the same scriptural pattern he is being taught. God's plan is that every one of His children is to be involved in making disciples, thus, continuing the multiplication process until the whole world is reached with the Gospel.

Let's look at *II Timothy 2:2*. How many spiritual generations are referred to in this verse?

3.

God's plan involves a multiplication process, in which we learn God's principles, and then teach others, so that they can, in turn, teach still others.

The marvelous thing is that at the same time that we, as believers, are carrying out our responsibilities to make disciples, God is doing a wonderful work in our own lives. Read *Romans 8:28-29*. According to *verse 28*, what does God do in our lives?

4.

In *verse 29*, what is God's goal for every believer? In other words, what is the good He intends to accomplish in our lives?

5.

Since God's plan is perfect, powerful, complete, and easily understood, the question now is: "Why hasn't every person in the world been reached?" Obviously, the problem isn't in God's plan, so the problem must lie in us — the failure must be on our part. It is certainly true that many reject the Gospel and are totally responsible for their rejection. Jesus said in *Matthew 7:14*, "... the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it." However, this does not excuse God's children from their responsibility to make disciples. Let's look at just three hindrances to the fulfillment of God's plan for reaching the world.

Why hasn't every person in the world been disciplined?

Hindrance 1: Failure in dealing with personal and interpersonal problems

One of the hindrances to the discipleship process is that believers often are not committed to being a part of God's plan. Think briefly about the spiritual history of many believers. Like all human beings, they come into this world as sinners, going their own way. Man does not seek God on his own (*Romans 3:10-23*).

Those who become believers are convicted and drawn to Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Many believers receive Jesus Christ as Savior by their teens or early twenties. After receiving Christ, many experience a "first love" relationship with the Lord (*Revelation 2:4*). As a result, they are often excited about their new lives in Christ; they understand how the Scriptures apply to their lives for the first time; they desire to have fellowship with other believers; they repent of their old ways; and so forth.

But how long does this "first love" experience last? Often, it lasts only a short time; perhaps six months, a year, or maybe even two. Then what happens? They encounter a test or a trial in which they once again become defeated. After a while, they recognize the conviction of the Holy Spirit, repent, and return to living God's way until another problem comes into their lives. So, they once again respond according to their old ways, and they are defeated again. By the time they are in their early twenties, many believers have developed patterns of falling into spiritual defeat. For example, they may experience grave difficulties at home or at work, disappointments with others, financial losses, health problems, and so forth.

While struggling with these ups and downs, many believers are not seeking to minister to others as part of God's plan to make disciples. They are too preoccupied with their own lives, caught up in the midst of personal and interpersonal problems.

Many believers are so busy treading water (spiritually speaking), trying to keep from drowning in their problems, that they do not even consider helping disciple others. They may even say, "Disciple others? How? No one ever disciplined me. I'm still trying to understand how to live God's way."

Satan understands very well the importance of discipleship, so he attempts, in many ways, to discourage Christians from making disciples. He might even encourage believers to be busily involved in many "good" church activities if that will divert them from making disciples.

Hindrance 2: Failure to look to the Scriptures as the all-sufficient source and to the body of Christ for guidance in dealing with those problems

Though much of Scripture deals with the problems of life, many church leaders refer troubled sheep entrusted to them to counselors, seminar speakers, teachers, and “treatment” centers who approach life either totally or partially through humanistic psychology. In many Christian educational institutions, students are told that when they become church leaders, they should expect to have people come to them with what they call three kinds of problems: physical, mental, and spiritual. They are encouraged to refer those with physical and, so-called, “mental” problems to outside experts. The students are told they are being taught to help people with spiritual problems, not physical or “mental” ones. What they do not realize is that when they become church leaders, practically all the people who will ask them for help are dealing with what the world categorizes as “mental” problems, such as, depression, anxiety, interpersonal problems, etc.

Although the world says there are three kinds of problems, the Bible only identifies two. When the Pharisees challenged Jesus regarding the type of people to whom He ministered, Jesus only acknowledged two kinds of problems: the physically sick, who need a physician (addressing physical problems), and the sinners, who need the Savior (addressing spiritual problems) (*based on Matthew 9:11-13*).

While the Lord normally uses medical doctors to treat physical problems, He has provided the Scriptures for guidance on how to face, deal with, and endure every other problem of life. God makes no distinction between what the world calls “mental” and “spiritual” problems. This will be explained thoroughly in Lessons 3 and 4.

Sadly, many people who should be helped by church leaders are referred to others who neglect the Bible as their authority, either partially or completely. Is it any wonder that, worldwide, the church lacks spiritual vitality when the ideas and philosophies of the world are substituted for the truth of God’s powerful Word?

Hindrance 3: The church has not emphasized biblical discipleship the way that Jesus trained His disciples.

Often, when believers speak of fulfilling the “Great Commission” (*Matthew 28:19-20*), they concentrate primarily on evangelism. Discipleship *does* involve evangelism as the first step, but biblical discipleship is much deeper than that. It concentrates further on teaching disciples how to live victorious lives in Christ. Let’s go back to *Matthew 28:20*. Jesus made it clear in this passage that making disciples includes teaching disciples to observe *all* that He taught. Notice the topics Jesus dealt with in the Sermon on the Mount (scan through Chapters 5-7 in the book of *Matthew*). What were the subjects he talked about?

Name at least five subjects.

6.

Jesus talked much about the difficulties of life, such as anger, persecution, reconciliation, lustful temptations, retaliation, divorce, hatred, worry, etc. He was preparing His disciples to face, deal with, and endure the problems of life. So the word “*all*” in *verse 20* indicates that discipleship is thorough. Biblical discipleship deals with every aspect of a person’s life. It is in-depth discipleship.

Jesus, our supreme example for how to disciple, spent most of His time training the twelve men He called to be His disciples. Yes, the Lord taught the masses; however, His primary objective in teaching was to train His disciples so that they would continue the process of making disciples after He returned

to heaven. He trained them thoroughly to face, deal with, and endure all situations of life. As a result, they all (except for the one who betrayed Him) remained victorious in the power of the Holy Spirit, and remained faithful in continuing the multiplication process.

In summary, when we consider the typical believer's lack of victory, the common practice of Christian leaders referring believers to non-biblical counselors, and the lack of in-depth discipleship in the church today, is it any wonder that debilitating problems are so prevalent among believers today?

Hopefully, you now are convinced that this Bible Study is important to you, and you recognize that the purposes of this study are: 1) to teach you how to face, deal with, and endure all difficulties of life; and 2) to prepare you to help others to overcome their difficulties of life.

INTRODUCTION TO LESSON 1

The first lesson in the *Self-Confrontation* manual establish a foundation for the entire Bible Study. They lay the basic foundation of salvation — the Lord Jesus Christ is the Rock upon Whom everything for living is built. Man cannot please God, overcome the problems of life, and have meaning or fruitfulness in life without a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

BEGINNING OF CHANGE

- A. Read the purposes of **LESSON 1: YOU CAN CHANGE BIBLICALLY (PART ONE)** (*Self-Confrontation*, Page 18).

- B. The lessons are based on biblical principles. The reason for this is that biblical principles are applicable in all cultures and do not change. They are also applicable to all tests and trials of life.

Remember, the second page of each lesson in the *Self-Confrontation* manual begins with the biblical principle or principles related to the lesson.

Start by reading the text in the box at the top of Page 19 of the *Self-Confrontation* manual. Notice that the box contains many Scripture references. Every statement in the manual is substantiated with the Scriptures. However, some lists of references, as in this box, are preceded by the words "based on."

- C. Read *Principle 1* on Page 19. You do not need to read all of the Scripture passages at this point. You will be directed to a few of these passages later.

Notice that *Principle 1* is a summary of the salvation message.

You may wonder why this study includes a detailed explanation of the salvation message. The reasons are twofold:

1. First, many churchgoers have not wholeheartedly committed themselves to Christ as Lord and Savior. Thinking that they are believers because they attend church or have made an emotional response to a gospel message, these individuals are trying to live God's way without His empowering grace.
 2. Second, many believers lack assurance of salvation. Part of the reason for this is that they are not aware of the essential elements of the gospel message. Thus, they often live in a defeated manner.
- D. Many people, even those who have attended church for years, are unaware of the essential elements of the salvation message. There is also much mis-teaching in the body of Christ about

some of those elements. Since salvation is the basic foundation for spiritual growth and is the prerequisite for overcoming life's problems, it is vital that you understand and have responded to all the aspects of salvation into your life. For example, let's begin by looking at the primary word relating to the biblical meaning of the word "belief." Consider how you would distinguish between a believer and an unbeliever. List some of the things that believers do that people think indicate they are truly believers.

7.

But can unbelievers display outwardly all of the characteristics you wrote down? Read *Matthew 7:21-23* and *II Corinthians 11:13-15*. Will those who perform miraculous feats necessarily get to heaven?

8.

To illustrate, let's consider the life of Judas — none of the other disciples seemed to detect his sin (read *John 13:21-25*). They could not distinguish whether he was a believer or an unbeliever based on what they saw of his life. Outwardly, he looked the same as the true disciples.

So how can you know whether or not you are a believer? To understand the characteristics of a true believer, it is necessary to know the essential truths regarding salvation.

E. To understand these truths better, please turn in the *Self-Confrontation* manual to Page 20.

1. Read the points under Sections **I**, **II**, and **III** on Pages 20 and 21. *NOTE: You may not need to spend much time looking up the verses, since most churchgoers are very familiar with these sections. If you have not heard much teaching about the plan of salvation, please review these sections.*
2. We will spend more time on Section **IV. God empowers you to choose** ..., since there are so many misunderstandings and unbiblical teachings about these points.

Under Section **IV**. (Page 21)

- a. Read the topic sentence, then Paragraph A. and Subparagraph 1. under A. Highlight in your manual the reference to *Romans 10:8-13* (the second reference in **IV. A. 1.**).

NOTE: Because there are hundreds of Scripture references in each lesson, it will be impossible to remember the foundational verses unless you highlight in your manual the ones taught. For this reason, you should highlight references to the verses you look up as you progress through this study. You may also want to highlight the verses in your Bible so you can find them easily.

Read *Romans 10:8-10* in your Bible. What two things does God say result in salvation?

9.

Notice that salvation includes both believing in the heart and confessing with the mouth Jesus as Lord. This is a public declaration that Jesus is Lord of your life. The word "Lord" means master. You are to submit to Him as your master or head. This means that you are placing yourself under His management. As seen by this passage, there is no such thing, in God's eyes, as separate "salvation" and "lordship" decisions.

- b. Read IV. A. 2. Then, highlight in your manual and read *Mark 1:15* in your Bible. What two things did Jesus say for people to do for salvation?

10.

Repentance is very important since it is an admission that you have been going against God's purposes, that you are sorry for opposing God, and you are turning around to go God's way. Also, notice that in **Luke 13:3*, Jesus says that unless a person repents, he will perish. Many groups teach that you should not tell someone that he needs to repent for salvation purposes. They claim that repentance is a "work." This is not so; repentance is not a work, but turning around, which carries with it the very important admission of having gone the *wrong* way. This does not mean a person has done any works yet. The righteous works that follow salvation are the fruit of repentance.

- c. Read Subparagraphs 3. and 4.

Then, highlight in your manual and read *John 1:12* in your Bible. Notice in *verse 12* that receiving and believing are synonyms. This verse leads us to a deeper understanding of the biblical truth about belief. In the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, Jesus says something rather startling to the people who have been following Him. He had just fed over 5,000 the day before and left them that night. So when they found Him on the other side of the Sea of Galilee the next day, He chided them in *verse 26* saying, "*Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves, and were filled.*" They were only interested in getting more food. In *verse 35*, He said, "*I am the bread of life.*" Furthermore, Jesus said, "*He who eats Me, he will also live because of Me*" (*verse 57*). This was so strange that He even had to explain to His disciples that He was talking about a spiritual truth by relating believing in Him with feeding on Him. The Lord said that to become children of God, we must receive Jesus into our lives just as completely as we receive physical food into our bodies.

Highlight in your manual and read *John 17:3*. What is eternal life equated with?

11.

The word *know* in the Scriptures describes the most intimate of relationships when it refers to one person knowing another. For example, Adam knew Eve intimately as his wife. When a man and wife marry, they become one. Now read *verses 22 and 23 of John 17*. How are we to be related to Jesus Christ?

12.

Clearly, the Lord desires for us to have an intimate relationship with Him. This is truly amazing. In fact, in *II Corinthians 11:2*, God says that Christians are what?

13.

It is also important to understand that faith and works go together. Good works are a response to God's gift of salvation. When a person is born again, he will live differently. He becomes espoused to the Lord. It would seem strange for a prospective bride to suggest to her future husband that they continue to live as if they were still single after they are married (e.g., not telling others they are married, making decisions independently, having exclusively separate groups of friends, etc.).

It is the same way in making a commitment to Jesus Christ. How are we saved, according to *Ephesians 2:8-10*?

14.

Salvation is by grace through faith, not by works. But what does *verse 10* tell us is the result of our being saved?

15.

When you receive the Lord Jesus Christ, you *will* do good works because you are a new creation. You will live differently, obeying and serving Christ out of your love for Him. So, God tells us we are not saved by good works, but, as saved people, the way we show we are saved is by our good works.

3. Read the contents of Section V. **By faith, you can take the first step of biblical change** on Page 22 of the *Self-Confrontation* manual. Do you recognize the need to make this commitment? You can do so right now by:
 - Confessing to God that you are a sinner, that you have been in rebellion toward Him and need His forgiveness,
 - Telling God that you repent of your sin and intend to follow His way rather than your own,
 - Acknowledging to God that neither you nor anyone else but Jesus Christ can save you because He alone died to pay the penalty for sins and rose from the dead so that you might have a new life, and
 - Inviting the Lord Jesus Christ to come into your life as your Savior and Lord,
 - Thanking God for His grace and mercy toward you and adopting you as His child.

If you have just made this commitment, put a check here (___) and tell another believer who can help you grow spiritually.

4. Read Section VI. **You must understand that man's way of solving problems falls short of God's solutions** on Pages 22-23. *NOTE: You do not need to spend much time looking up the referenced verses.*
5. Read Section VII. **You need to understand the difference between man's way and God's way** on Pages 23-24. *NOTE: You do not need to spend much time looking up the referenced verses.* Notice that man's way is a life oriented on self, while God's way is a life that is intimately related to Him and totally focused on living for Him.

SCRIPTURE RECITATION

Recite *Ephesians 2:8-9* to someone at home, in class, or elsewhere. Put a check here (___) when you have accurately recited the verses.

ADDITIONAL HOMEWORK

Here are some additional assignments. You will need to decide how much time you can spend on the additional homework.

- A. In your own words, write the meaning of *Ephesians 2:8-9*.

16.

- B Describe how a person can be saved. Write at least one scripture reference for each point.

17.

QUESTION AND CONCLUSION

- A. What was the most significant truth you learned in completing this lesson?

18.

- B This lesson establishes a foundation for the entire Bible Study. It lays the basic foundation of salvation which involves:

- Confessing to God that you are a sinner, that you have been in rebellion toward Him and need His forgiveness,
- Telling God that you repent of your sin and intend to follow His way rather than your own,
- Acknowledging to God that neither you nor anyone else but Jesus Christ can save you because He alone died to pay the penalty for sins and rose from the dead so that you might have a new life, and
- Inviting the Lord Jesus Christ to come into your life as your Savior and Lord.

- C. If you have not already made this commitment, consider reading the Gospel of John and write down Jesus' explanation of how a person can be saved and have eternal life.

When you receive Christ into your life, it does not mean that all of your present problems will disappear or that you won't have any more problems in the future. But it does mean that you can face, deal with, and endure any problem of living in a way that you never could have before you were saved. In fact, you can begin the process of biblical change immediately.